(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to round-off these elements and stop anti-national activities; and

(c) the details of the progress made so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI HARIN PATHAK) : (a) to (c) One recent case of a terrorist module belonging to Jaish-E-Mohammed (JeM) having links with the students operating from Western Uttar Pradesh has come to notice. This module has been busted by the U.P Police in association with the Central agencies with the killing of Manzur Dar, Pakistani JeM District Commander for Baramulla in Jammu and Kashmir at Noida (U.P.) on March 12, 2003. In this connection, four students studying in Western U.P. have been arrested and incriminating items of terrorist hardware recovered from them. Cases have been registered against these students under the relevant laws.

Hovercrafts used by the Army and Navy

*475. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA:

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Army and/or Navy use Hovercrafts;

(b) if so. how many Hovercrafts are inducted in the Army and Navy; and

(c) if not, whether the Ministry intends to induct Hovercrafts in the Army and Navy for their amphibious operations ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (PROF. CHAMAN LAL GUPTA):

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to part (a) of the Question.

(c) No, Sir.

List of BPL families

*479. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI:

SHRMATI N.P. DURGA:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court of India has asked the Union Government to file an affidavit in response to an allegation that the Central Government has

decided to drastically prune the list of Below Poverty Line (BPL) families in the country;

(b) if so. the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether the affidavit has since been filed; and

(d) if so, the position taken by Government therein?

THEMIMSTEROFRURALDEVELOPMENT(SHPJ ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) to (d) The People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) had filed a Writ Petition No. 1% of 2001 in the Supreme Court of India against Union of India (represented by the Department of Food and Public Distribution) and Others regarding distribution of food grains to the poor. In the Interlocutory Application No. 25 of 2003 in the said Writ Petition, several grievances have been mentioned in respect of the Below Poverty Line Census, 2002 being conducted in the rural areas of the country. These include an allegation that the Ministry of Rural Development has advised the States to restrict the number of persons below poverty line. An affidavit is being filed by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution in the Supreme Court, explaining the position of the Government.

Illegal Bangladeshis

*480. SHRILALIT SURI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a sizeable concentration of Bangladeshis illegally residing in Delhi, U.P., particularly in Noida and in the Stales bordering Bangladesh and Bihar;

(b) their estimated number at present, State and U.T.-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to deport them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. It is a fact that a large number of Bangladeshi nationals, who have managed to infiltrate into the country due to the long, open and porous nature of the international border are illegally residing in the States bordering Bangladesh such as West Bengal. Assam, Bihar, Tripura as well as in States like Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, etc. Such illegal Bangladeshi immigrants are able to mingle with the local population quite easily due to ethnic, linguistic and cultural similarities. Therefore exact estimate about their numbers state-wise are not readily available.